'REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 25, 2004 and the Advisory Action dated July 21, 2004. Claims 34 and 36 to 39 are pending in the application, all of which are independent, and all of which have been amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claims 34 and 36 to 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,908,861 (Brachtl). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention generally concerns data processing by which a digital signature is outputted to an external device. The digital signature is generated from data inputted from an internal unit and from secret key information. According to one feature of the invention, the secret key information is input from an external device, where the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit.

Referring specifically to the claims, independent Claim 34 as amended is directed to a data input apparatus including first input means for inputting data from an internal unit. The data input apparatus also includes second input means for inputting secret key information from an external device, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit. In addition, the data input apparatus includes generating means for generating a digital signature using the data and the secret key information, and outputting means for outputting the digital signature to the external device.

In a similar manner, independent Claims 36, 37 and 38 are respectively directed to a method, computer-executable program code and a computer-readable memory medium.

Independent Claim 39 as amended is directed to a data input system including first input means for inputting data from an internal unit and compressor means for compressing the data. The data input system also includes second input means for inputting secret key information stored in an external device, wherein the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit. In addition, the data input system includes generating means for generating a digital signature using the compressed data and the secret key information, first outputting means for outputting the digital signature to the external device, and second output means for outputting the input data.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention. In particular, the Brachtl patent is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the feature of inputting secret key information from an external device, where the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit.

As understood by Applicant, Brachtl discloses a method for checking the integrity of received data. A digital signature (DSG) is generated of minimum length with a public key algorithm by first compressing a message (M) of arbitrary length to a fixed length modification detection code (MDC) quantity. Instead of calculating the DSG for M, the DSG is calculated for the compressed message, using a secret key (SK). The MDC is generated with public quantities, so that a sender and receiver are able to use the same method of compression without the need to introduce secret parameters. See Brachtl, column 4, lines 10 to 19; and Figures 1 and 2.

Although Brachtl describes that a message M, secret key SK and digital signature DSG are used to authenticate data, it does not teach that an external device is

used to input the secret key information, where the external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit.

The Office Action cites to Brachtl's Figure 2 for its alleged disclosure of inputting secret key information from an external device. However, Fig. 2 of Brachtl merely indicates that a secret key is input. There is nothing in Brachtl to disclose or suggest that an external device is used to input the secret key. Moreover, Brachtl is not seen to teach that such an external device is portable and interfaces with the internal unit.

In the Advisory Action dated July 21, 2004, the Examiner repeats his position that Brachtl inputs a secret key from an external device. Applicant respectfully disagrees. It is true, as described above, that Brachtl's Fig. 2 describes that a secret key is used, but there is nothing in Brachtl that suggests that the secret key is input from an external device, much less from an external device that is portable and interfaces with an internal unit.

Accordingly, based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 34 and 36 to 39 are believed to be allowable over the applied reference.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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